

Report from UiB Workshop III on 29.05.18

1. Summary

The University of Bergen (UiB) has started an affiliation process to the EU "Charter and Code" (C&C) according to the "strengthened" HRS4R implementation method. The affiliation process at UiB is supervised by the C&C Steering Committee, and the gap analysis is conducted in the form of a questionnaire and workshops for three working groups.

Workshop III dealt with the C&C topic "Working Conditions and Social Security". The working groups consisted of people at the academic/administrative level and researchers at various career levels from UiB's faculties. The topic was illustrated with introductions and followed up by discussions in the working group based on C&C principles and UiB's practices in the field. Positive and negative variations were considered with a view to any proposed remedial measures in UiB's Action Plan.

The main points for discussion in the working group can be summarised as that it is not sufficient to define who is responsible for career development, there must also be a career development tool. Training and responsibility for career development must be defined for career paths within and outside of academia. The purpose of the new position structure for universities and university colleges is that it should better cover the sector's social responsibility in its entirety, and make visible clear and distinct career paths in the sector for all employees in academic positions. Increasing participation in externally funded project work and international networks allows research positions to have a clearer foundation than is the case in today's position structure in the university sector. Research positions should be further regulated in guidelines and employment agreements for international positions and externally funded projects. In UiB's process for affiliation to C&C, the term "HR for researchers" is used in accordance with the primary purpose of C&C's Principle 24 on working conditions; to ensure that researchers' working conditions provide sufficient flexibility to achieve good research results. Salary, stable employment and stimulating research environments are some of the tools that create attractive working conditions for researchers.

Proposals for remedial measures in UiB's Action Plan will be considered as a whole during the further administrative procedures, and will be based on positive and negative variations arising from the survey and discussions in all the workshops.

2. Background and purpose of Workshop III

UiB signed a declaration of intent on the implementation of C&C, on 05.03.09, and has been for many years a EURAXCESS Contact Point. The university management at UiB decided in the spring of 2016 to start the process of affiliation to C&C according to the "strengthened" HRS4R implementation method. The University Board has been briefed on several occasions regarding the development of the relationship with C&C and the affiliation process.

The affiliation process at UiB is monitored by the C&C Steering Committee. The University Director heads the Steering Committee, and its members are academic/administrative leaders and researchers at various career levels. The Steering Committee has decided that UiB's gap analysis should be carried out in the form of a questionnaire, and workshops for three working groups.

The Steering Committee has given the working group for Workshop III the following mandate:

"Working Group III" shall use the workshop as an analysis tool to conduct a gap analysis with the aim of implementing UiB's Charter and Code in accordance with the "strengthened" HRS4-R. The gap

analysis must compare UiB's actual practices with the principles for "Working Conditions and Social Security" as stated in the Charter and Code. It should state the extent to which UiB already complies with each of these principles, and document the status with reference to existing strategy and action plans etc. It should also state whether national or institutional regulations endorse or oppose implementation of any of the principles. The gap analysis must describe existing variations in such a way that it is possible to see the correlation between the variation and proposed remedial measures in the Action Plan to fulfil the principles.

3. Composition of the working group and agenda for Workshop III

The C&C Steering Committee has given general recommendations that the working groups should be made up of people at an academic management level and researchers at different career levels from UiB's faculties.

Workshop III was conducted on 29.05.18 and the following people participated in the working group:

Academic/Administrative Level:

HR Director Sonja Irene Dyrkorn, JUS Professor Bert-Elen R. Konow, HF Deputy Director Susanne Ostendorf and MAT Advisor Friederike Hoffmann.

Pro-rector Margareth Hagen participated during items 3 and 4 of the agenda.

Researchers at various career levels:

R1 MED Post-doctoral fellow Anesa Mulabecirovic, R1 SV PhD Eirik Andre Strømmland, R2 HF Post-doctoral fellow Pål Antonsen, R2 SV Post-doctoral fellow Ingvild Aagedahl Skage and R3 KMD Professor Ashley Booth.

Agenda for the meeting:

- 09:00-09:15: Welcome and some practical information about the organisation of the workshop
- 09:15-09:30: Brief overview of C&C principles for the "Working Conditions and Social Security" topic.
- 09:30-10:45: Career development - tools and framework. Introductory speaker Iuliana Hussein, NTNU
- 10:45-12:00: C&C in a new position structure at universities and university colleges. Introductory speaker Senior Advisor Svein Åge Eilertsen.
- 12:00-13:00: Lunch
- 13:00-14:15: "HR for Scientists" through attractive working conditions. Introductory speaker HR Director Sonja Dyrkorn
- 14:15-15:00: Summary of Workshop III and the way forward

The meeting was led by HR Director Sonja Dyrkorn, and conducted in accordance with the agenda and ended at 14.30.

The protocol from Workshop III is published on UiB's C&C website:

www.uib.no/charterandcode

4. Introductory speakers and presentations in Workshop III

Senior Advisor Svein Åge Eilertsen from the University Director's Office gave a brief overview of the C & C principles under the theme "Working Conditions and Social Security"

The REFLEX career development tool was presented by NTNU Advisor Iuliana Hussein. She described the development and content of the tool, as well as the framework for the researchers' and institutions' use of it. Following the presentation, the working group discussed various career development initiatives at UiB, and the need for an overview and a unified career development tool for the institution and researchers at all career levels.

A report was presented recently on the new position structure at universities and university colleges in Norway. Senior Advisor Svein Åge Eilertsen briefed on the report from a C&C perspective. The proposal for a new position structure is based on a comparison with position structures in six European countries, and proposes measures that are familiar from the C&C principles on working conditions. The working group discussed the proposal and initiatives based on UiB's current position structure for researcher positions. Positive and negative aspects of UiB's position practices were assessed with a view to possible proposed remedial measures.

HR Director Sonja Dyrkorn discussed how "HR for researchers" can be developed through attractive working conditions. The primary purpose of "HR for researchers" in the context of C&C is to ensure that researchers' working conditions allow sufficient flexibility to achieve good research results. She presented a brief overview of the instruments, schemes and regulations at UiB. Based on some of the C&C principles on working conditions, she described the background for discussions in the working group. The topic was discussed in the working group based on the conditions at UiB, and considered with a view to any proposed remedial measures.

The PowerPoint presentations used by the speakers are available on UiB's C&C website:

www.uib.no/charterandcode

5. Survey conducted among UiB's researchers

The questionnaire was prepared by an academic group comprising Professor Roger Strand (SVT), postdoctoral fellow Erik Knudsen, Department of Information Science and Media Studies, and Advisor Jill A. Opsahl (HR). The survey was conducted in February 2018 among all employees in scientific positions at UiB. Overall response rate was 34%, with 734 responses given. The questions in the survey are linked to a sample of 17 of the C&C principles. In the final report from the survey, the questions are grouped between questions related to Evaluation Committees, Pages 9-21, general questions, Pages 22-29, employment situation and career development, Pages 30-39 and guidance Pages 40-45.

The report functions both as part of UiB's gap analysis and as background material for the workshops. It was therefore made available to the workshop as background material, along with a form that showed the correlation between the relevant C&C principles, national/institutional regulation and the survey. In relation to career development, the questionnaire shows the researchers' perception of staff interviews on Pages 35-37. The use of researchers in teaching appears on Pages 31-34 and 38.

The final report on the survey of C&C at UiB is published on UiB's C&C website:

www.uib.no/charterandcode

6. Discussions during workshop III on career development tools and frameworks.

The purpose of the development of Reflex was to design an intelligent framework for career development based on the direct involvement of researchers, their employers, HR departments, EURAXESS Service Centres and other relevant actors. Reflex is a free tool that is available to everyone and can be used for career development within and outside of academia. The "Reflex Training Model Scheme" is a flexible, online strategy tool with the following topics; mobility, networking, career counselling, professional skills and development and interactions with business and organisations.

It is not sufficient to define who is responsible for career development, it is also necessary to have career development tools. Many initiatives are being used locally for career development at UiB, which should be surveyed in order to obtain an institutional overview aimed at establishing an overarching and unified career development tool.

Staff interviews are a suitable tool for career development and are used for employees at UiB. The guides prepared for staff interviews are being revised, but it is also important to emphasise that it is a management responsibility to conduct staff interviews for all researchers. Training in career counselling for managers and supervisors must be viewed in conjunction with the use of career development tools for positions both within and outside of academia.

It is important to obtain knowledge of young scientists' ambitions and career plans. It will be necessary to establish central schemes and responsibilities, particularly for career paths outside academia. At UiB, some faculties use annual career days and alumni networks as information tools for career paths outside academia. Mentorship will be of particular relevance for academic career paths.

7. Discussions during Workshop III on proposals for a new position structure at universities and university colleges viewed from a C&C perspective.

The purpose of the proposed new position structure for universities and university colleges is that it should better cover the sector's social responsibility as a whole, and make visible clear and distinct career paths in the sector for all employees in academic positions. The social responsibility for educating researchers to positions outside academia necessitates that career counselling must also be adapted to research positions in administration and business and industry.

Increasing participation in externally funded project work and international networks allows research positions to have a clearer foundation than is the case in today's position structure in the university sector. In the absence of defined research positions at the universities, postdoctoral positions in particular have been used to a greater degree for research than as qualification positions. The proposal adapts a new Norwegian position structure to the EU's classification of researchers. This is achieved among other things by a more focused and specific use of postdoctoral- and tenure positions, so that these may be used as real qualification positions.

Career paths are proposed through three career ladders, with a new flexible ladder that combines research and teaching. This aims to provide researchers and educators in the sector with several possible career paths, and to give institutions greater flexibility in the use of manpower, in particular for the major primary research and education tasks. This career ladder contributes on the one hand to defining new research positions but, on the other hand, the relationship with teaching positions becomes more diffuse, particularly for associate professor positions. Today, teaching in research

positions in universities is viewed as problematic, and is therefore only allowed to a limited extent. However, teaching is a valuable part of a researcher's career path, if it is held within the limits set out in C&C Principle 33. Today, teaching responsibilities are included in PhD and postdoctoral positions to an extent that may preclude research activity in the positions.

To achieve balanced career ladders, formalised incentives are proposed, such as wages and salaries, working conditions, career development programmes/courses, research/study periods and teamwork. The use of incentives related to working conditions is important to any development of attractive research positions. The career ladder for researchers and teachers can be used to achieve stable and long-term working conditions for researchers, and reduce the use of temporary employment in the sector.

Research positions should be further regulated in guidelines and employment agreements for international positions and externally funded projects.

8. Discussions during workshop III on "HR for researchers" through C&C working conditions.

In UiB's process for affiliation to C&C, the term "HR for researchers" is used in accordance with the primary purpose of C&C's Principle 24 on working conditions; to ensure that researchers' working conditions provide sufficient flexibility to achieve good research results. Many C&C principles apply to working conditions that can provide "good research results" and are well-regulated in national and institutional regulations and agreements at UiB.

Wages and salaries are one of the measures that ensure attractive working conditions for researchers. General wage development must be seen in conjunction with individual wage compensation in connection with promotion on the career ladder, and with the allocation of prestigious research projects etc. The civil service pay system is developing in the direction of more individual pay determination locally in the institutions, but it is still important that there is openness on this subject. UiB's pay policy must be organised and applied for fair and attractive pay conditions for researchers at all career levels.

Stable and long-term employment is experienced by many researchers as just as important as pay when comparing different working conditions. C&C Principle 25 has the express aim that employment conditions must be such that they ensure that researchers' results are not undermined. In addition, reference is made to the EU directive on temporary employment. Among other things, the directive aims to prevent temporary employees from being treated worse than permanent employees in similar positions, and to prevent the misuse of repeated, consecutive temporary employment agreements. New Norwegian legislation related to temporary employment goes beyond the directive in limiting the use of temporary employment in the university and university college sector. It is important that the new regulations are complied with in practice.

However, the question may be posed as to whether good career planning and mobility are not equally important in a career development perspective, as employment in permanent research positions. It could be helpful to survey the various career initiatives used by UiB, and possibly set this in system with an overarching and unified career development tool. It is also important to stimulate older researchers to participate in professional development.

C&C stimulates investments in human resources and equipment to develop good research and training environments. Modern research requires the use of professional competence across the faculties. It is therefore important to develop meeting places and systems for interdisciplinary cooperation. Writing of applications and operation of projects are time-consuming, and are to a

great degree performed by the researchers themselves. Administrative support for UiB's support for externally-funded research activities (BOA) should therefore be further developed.